

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-07 IO-13
TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-08 /079 W
-----141033Z 068000 /10

O 140916Z APR 77
FM AMCONSUL KARACHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1613
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KARACHI 1768

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, PINT
SUBJECT: SECURITY SITUATION IN SIND

1. MANY PROCESSIONS WERE TAKEN OUT IN KARACHI APRIL 13
BY THE STUDENTS AS WELL AS PNA GROUPS. SOME WERE ESCORTED
BY ARMY TROOPS AND NOT INTEFERED WITH SO LONG AS THEY
REMAINED PEACEFUL. OTHER PROCESSIONS AND DEMONSTRATIONS
WERE VIOLENT WITH NUMEROUS CASES OF ARSON, LOOTING AND
TRASHING REPORTED. NO DEATHS WERE REPORTED IN KARACHI
ALTHOUGH THERE WERE REPORTED INSTANCES OF PPP WORKERS
FIRING ON PNA DEMONSTRATORS AND OF THE SECURITY FORCES
FIRING IN THE AIR TO DRIVE OFF DEMONSTRATORS BENT ON
DESTRUCTION AND ARSON. TEARGAS WAS USED HERE AND THERE.
THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A PATTERN OF ATTACKS TARGETED
ON BANKS, PPP PARTY OFFICES, PPP-OWNED
BUSINESSES, THE HOMES OF PPP LOCAL LEADERS, AND WINE
SHOPS.

2. DESPITE THIS WIDESPREAD ACTIVITY, MOST OF IT IN THE
LATE AFTERNOON AND EVENING, THE CITY WENT ABOUT ITS
BUSINESS AS USUAL INsofar AS POSSIBLE. TRAFFIC IN
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SOME AREAS WAS SLOWED BY THE PROCESSIONS AND A FEW BARRICADES,
AND BUSSES WERE STONED IN AT LEAST ONE PLACE, BUT THERE
WAS NO COORDINATED EFFORT TO SHUT DOWN THE CITY AS THERE
WAS APRIL 11.

3. HYDERABAD RETAINED ITS REPUTATION AS A CENTER OF
PERSISTENT VIOLENCE. THE DEPREDACTIONS OF DEMONSTRATORS

LED TO GUNFIRE AGAINST THEM AND THE KILLING OF AT LEAST TWO. THE PRESS REPORTS THAT THE ARMY WAS INVOLVED IN THE FIRING. THE ACTION, INCLUDING ARSON AGAINST BANKS, CARS, A HOTEL AND PPP CENTERS, WAS SO INTENSE AND PROLONGED IN DOWNTOWN HYDERABAD THAT THE STAFF OF OUR USIS CENTER THERE WAS MAROONED UNTIL 10:00 P.M.

4. MORE OF THE SAME SEEMS TO BE IN STORE FOR KARACHI TODAY, APRIL 14. IN A SLIGHTLY NEW TWIST, A NEWLY FORMED PAKISTAN LABOR ALLIANCE (MOHAMMAD SHARIF, PRESIDENT) IN TAKING THE LEAD BY CONDUCTING FOUR RALLIES. THE STUDENT ACTION COMMITTEE HAS ANNOUNCED ITS SUPPORT OF THE RALLIES AND ITS INTENTION TO JOIN THEM RATHER THAN TO STAGE RALLIES OF ITS OWN. THE PNA WOMEN ALSO PLAN TO PARADE APRIL 14.

5. THE PNA CLAIMS ITS CALL TO PEOPLE TO WITHDRAW THEIR MONEY FROM THE BANKS HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL, BUT OUR SOURCES IN THE BANKING COMMUNITY CONTINUE TO DESCRIBE THE MOVEMENT AS SMALL. DEPOSITS AND NEW ACCOUNTS IN AMERICAN BANKS CONTINUE TO INCREASE, SEEMING TO REFLECT THE TRANSFER OF MONEY FROM LOCAL BANKS, BUT THE AMOUNTS ARE SMALL AND THE VOLUME OF TRANSACTIONS MODEST THUS FAR. ONE NEWSPAPER REPORTS REFUSAL AT SOME BANKS TO HONOR WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS EXCEEDING FIVE THOUSAND RUPEES. OUR LOCAL BANKING SOURCES DENY THIS STORY, AND ADD THAT WITHDRAWALS FROM SAVINGS ACCOUNTS ARE BEING PERMITTED EVEN WITHOUT THE NORMAL ADVANCE NOTICE STIPULATED BY LAW.

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6. MANY SHOPKEEPERS IN KARACHI ARE ALTERING THEIR HOURS SO AS TO CLOSE AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE AFTERNOON AND THUS AVOID THE DISRUPTION AND POSSIBLE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF THE PROCESSIONS THAT GENERALLY BEGIN AT 4:00 P.M.

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